

## **Annual Governance Statement 2022-23:** **Explanation of “No” to Assertion 4**

1. A parish council must publish an explanation if it answers “No” to any of the nine assertions in the Annual Governance Statement.
2. The publication “Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England” sets out what a parish council must do in our order to be able to answer “Yes” to each assertion.
3. You can view the March 2022 edition of the publication here, which applied to the financial year 2022-23: [saaa.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/PractitionersGuide\\_2022.pdf](https://saaa.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/PractitionersGuide_2022.pdf)

### **Assertion 4**

4. This Council has answered “No” to Assertion 4 which reads: “We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors’ rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.”
5. At the end of the financial year 2021-22, the Council was still struggling to regain control of a National Savings Investment Account and was unable to finalise the Accounting Statements 2021-22 until it was sure how much was in the account and what interest had been paid at the end of the calendar year 2021.
6. The Council eventually regained control of the account in July 2022 and arranged for the Internal Auditor to visit in September 2022 to conduct the internal audit.
7. This meant the Council completely missed the deadline of 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022 for completing the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2021-22 and was not able to begin the period for the exercise of public rights in time for it to include the first ten working days of July 2022 as required.
8. The Council is confident that the problem will not recur. The Council approved and published the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022-23 by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023 and was able to begin the period for the exercise of public rights in time for it to include the first ten working days of July 2023 as required.

Geoffrey Ferres  
Responsible Financial Officer  
Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2023